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ABSTRACT

During April and May 1980, the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Service conducted a survey involving a nationally representative sample of examinees to gather detailed information on the background and preparation of persons currently taking the tests. This report is based on the responses of about 13,000 GED candidates at nearly 250 randomly selected GED testing centers throughout the United States. The centers selected in this study represent a 10 percent random sample of centers in the United States as of January 1979. Results of the survey indicated that one-half of the examinees were 21 years old or younger. Nearly 70 percent of the candidates had completed the 10th grade or higher before leaving school. More than 75 percent reported grades of "C" or higher while enrolled in high school. About 80 percent of the examinees did prepare in some manner for the tests; however, actual reported out-of-pocket expenses for preparation were relatively low. Further, 90 percent reported that they regularly read books, magazines, or newspapers, and 60 percent cited "general knowledge" as their most important reason for reading. The survey instrument and a description of sampling procedures are appended. (Author/KC)

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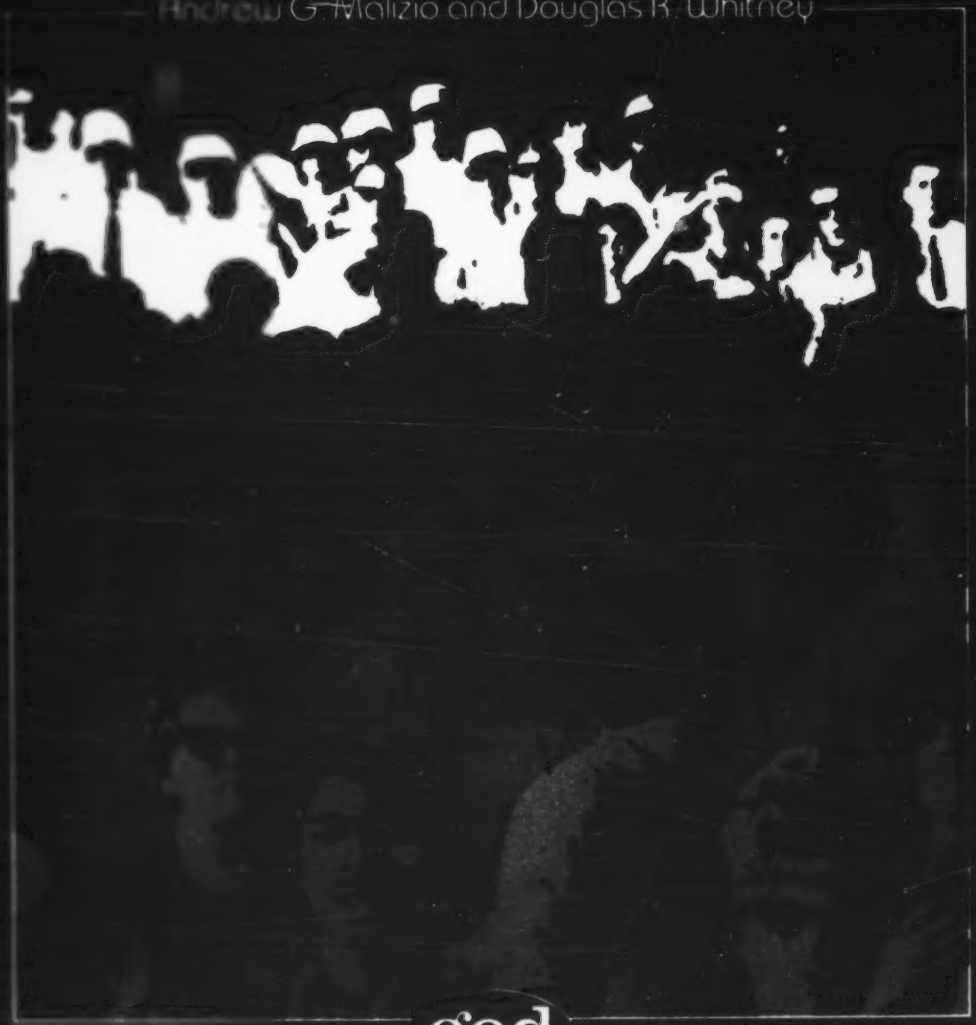
WHO TAKES THE GED TESTS?

Andrew G. Malizio and Douglas R. Whitney



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GED TESTING SERVICE
RESEARCH STUDIES, NUMBER 1
MARCH 1981

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The GED testing program began in 1942 with the development of a battery of tests for U.S. military personnel who had not completed their high school studies. Today, through the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education, the tests are administered in all 50 states, in many Canadian provinces, and in the U.S. territories. The GED testing program has offered millions of adults a "second chance" by enabling them to demonstrate that they have many of the skills they would have acquired had they been able to remain in high school.

Limited copies of this report are available for $2 (prepaid) from the GED Testing Service (Research and Development), American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Suite 20, Washington, D.C. 20036.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- More than half the GED Examinees surveyed were 21 years old or younger.

- About 70% of GED examinees who currently take the GED Tests have completed the 10th grade or higher. More than 75% report high school grades of "C" or higher.

- Nearly 39% of the examinees take the GED chiefly for job-related reasons while another 30% take the GED for reasons related to furthering their education.

- Approximately 80% of the examinees prepare in some manner for the tests. Almost half of the examinees attend a review class in Writing Skills, Social Studies, Science, Reading, or Mathematics.

- Nearly one-fifth of the examinees attended review classes in each of the five major areas of the GED test battery.

- The typical examinee spends about 20 hours preparing for the tests, and about $10 for preparation.

- Most GED examinees (90%) read books, magazines, or newspapers at least once per week. The typical examinee reads about eight hours per week.

ABSTRACT

Fundamental to the success of the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Service and to its growth over the years has been the acceptance of the GED Tests by the educational community as a valid means for awarding high school credentials. All fifty states, the District of Columbia, six U.S. territories or possessions, and many Canadian provinces and territories now award credentials based on GED Test results.

During April and May 1980, the GED Testing Service conducted a survey involving a nationally representative sample of examinees to gather detailed information on the background and preparation of persons currently taking the tests. This report is based on the responses of about 13,000 GED candidates at nearly 250 randomly selected GED testing centers throughout the United States. The centers selected in this study represent a 10% random sample of centers in the U.S. as of January, 1979.

Results indicated that one-half of the examinees were 21 years old or younger. Nearly 70% of the candidates had completed the 10th grade or higher before leaving school. More than 75% reported grades of "C" or higher while enrolled in high school. About 80% of the examinees did prepare in some manner for the tests; however, actual reported out-of-pocket expenses for preparation were relatively low. Further, 90% reported that they regularly read books, magazines, or newspapers, and 60% cited "General Knowledge" as their most important reason for reading.

This initial report summarizes each item of the questionnaire data. Subsequent reports will contain additional information including two-way tables such as "age and gender by reasons for taking the GED tests". Relationships of the amount and kind of preparation to actual test performance will also be discussed in future reports.

INTRODUCTION

For a variety of reasons, many adults have not completed a regular high school program of instruction. This does not mean, however, that their educational growth and experiences ceased upon leaving school. Many persons make considerable educational progress through a variety of experiences encountered in everyday life. It is the purpose of the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) to provide a means by which learning acquired from such educational experiences can be evaluated and recognized. The GED Tests enable qualified individuals to earn high school equivalency diplomas or certificates, to qualify for certain jobs, to gain promotions, or to pursue higher education or other personal goals.

The GED testing program began in 1942 with the development, by the examination staff of the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI), of a battery of tests designed to measure the major outcomes and concepts generally associated with four years of high school education. The tests were administered to military personnel in order to facilitate readjustment to civilian life and pursuit of educational and vocational goals. The USAFI examination staff consisted of civilian testing experts who worked with an advisory committee that was established with the support and cooperation of the American Council on Education (ACE), the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and regional accrediting associations.

Fundamental to the success of the program and to its growth over the years has been the acceptance of the GED Tests by the educational community as a valid means for awarding high school credentials. All fifty states, the District of Columbia, six U.S. territories or possessions, and many Canadian provinces and territories now administer GED Tests. High school credentials issued by state departments of education on the basis of satisfactory GED Test scores are official documents and, like regular high school diplomas, are nearly always accepted as valid credentials by employers and directors of apprenticeship and other training programs. In addition, most college and university admissions offices accept credentials resulting from GED Test scores in lieu of complete high school transcripts.

Through the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education, GED tests are administered to civilians and military personnel at about 2,800 Official GED Testing Centers in the states, provinces, and territories. In addition, testing services are provided for military personnel stationed overseas, persons confined to federal and some state correctional and health institutions, and American civilians and American citizens living overseas. So that more adults may have the opportunity to take the GED Tests, special editions are now available in Braille, large print, and audio cassettes. The tests are available in English, French, and Spanish editions. In 1979, more than 550,000 adults completed all five GED Tests for the first time.

The GED Tests are designed to measure, as accurately as possible, the application of the knowledge and skills generally associated with four years of high school instruction. The tests feature a multiple choice question format for each of five subject areas: Writing Skills, Social Studies, Science, Reading Skills, and Mathematics. These subject areas correspond to the general framework of many high school curricula.[1] The tests are designed, however, not to penalize candidates who lack recent academic or classroom experience or who have acquired their education informally. Candidates are tested chiefly on their retention of broad concepts and generalizations, rather than on how well they can remember facts and details or precise definitions.

In 1975, test development began for new versions of the GED Tests. Based on careful studies and on the advice of subject-matter advisory panels, the tests were shortened, and in two subjects the number of questions (items) based on reading passages was reduced.

In Spring 1977, the current GED Tests were standardized and equated with a stratified random sample of approximately 3,600 high school students

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[1] A free brochure describing the purpose and content of the Tests of General Educational Development may be obtained by writing: The GED Testing Service, c/o American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

in the United States. A separate study of approximately 300 adult GED candidates was conducted to ensure the appropriateness of the new tests for this group (ETS, 1978).

Analyses of the data from both studies have revealed two important outcomes: 1) The tests are highly reliable. 2) When commonly used standards for equivalency certification were applied, passing rates were generally similar for the GED candidates and for the high school seniors. (GEDTS, 1979).

ORIGINS OF THIS STUDY

Since information about candidates is not routinely collected or summarized, the only national picture of candidate characteristics and test performance previously available came through the few aggregate statistics reported in the Annual Statistical Report. The GED Testing Service believed that a substantial need existed for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data from a nationally representative sample of adults taking the GED Tests. The National Survey of Spring 1980 Examinees marks the first time such a comprehensive sampling has been conducted. The purposes of the study were threefold:

(1) To provide the information needed to describe the "typical" American adult who takes the GED battery as well as to emphasize the wide range of experiences of GED candidates;

(2) To help explain the relationships of test scores to age, gender, and method of preparation for the tests; and

(3) To gather information and statistical data that will be useful in the development of future forms of the GED Tests.

To accomplish these goals, information was collected from a nationally representative sample of about 250 Official Testing Centers throughout the United States during April and May 1980. This sample of centers represented about ten percent of the current centers in the United States and included

at least one center from each state. A questionnaire, specifically designed for use in the study was prepared and distributed to all randomly selected centers (see Appendix A.) Testing supervisors at participating centers asked all candidates who took one or more of the tests in the GED battery during April and May 1980 to complete the questionnaire. A more detailed description of the sample selection procedures as well as the number of centers participating is presented in Appendix B. Originally, 243 centers were selected. However, at least five of the randomly selected centers did not conduct any testing during the study period. Completed survey forms for at least one examinee were returned by the testing supervisors (chief examiners) at 229 (97%) of the 238 centers at which testing was conducted. This resulted in usable responses from 12,646 examinees.

OVERALL PLAN FOR DATA ANALYSES

This study provides a data base that will permit the GED Testing Service Research and Development Staff to complete a series of reports during the next three years. The reports to be issued can be characterized as follows:

Phase 1: A detailed report describing the candidates who take the GED Tests. This report will consider all characteristics reflected in the survey. A second report in this phase will describe the differences in characteristics among major examinee subpopulations.

Phase 2: A detailed report relating candidate characteristics to the scores earned on the GED Tests. A second report will focus on the differences in the test results of major examinee subpopulations.

Phase 3: Additional reports involving detailed analyses of the examinees' performance on the various kinds of questions in the test battery.

AIMS OF THIS REPORT

This report describes, in as much detail as the data permit, characteristics of candidates who currently take the GED Tests. In addition to these descriptions, the GED candidate sample will be compared to the general adult population and the adult population with less than high school completion in the United States. Typically, results are summarized in the main body of this report, while specific tables and more comprehensive information are presented in appendices. Unless otherwise noted, use of the word "typical" refers to the median value for a given item. Percentages reported in all tables and appendices are based on the actual number of persons responding to the specific questions. In other words, examinees who did not answer a given item were not included in the relative percentages for that item.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF EXAMINEES

Location

As previously indicated, at least one examinee from each state participated in this study. The largest numbers of examinees were tested in New York, Texas, Pennsylvania, California, Florida, and Illinois, representing a combined total of more than 44% of the sample. According to the 1979 Annual Statistical Report, these six states represented about 39% of the total number of adults taking one or more GED tests in the United States (GEDTS, 1980). Based on the latest available data, these same six states, with the exception of Florida, also have the largest non-high school graduate adult population (Current Population Reports, NO. 334, p. 29). A detailed breakdown of the number of examinees from each state who participated in the study is presented in Table 1.

Gender

According to recent Current Population Reports (CPR), nearly 25 million women and 22 million men in the United States aged 16 years old and over are

not enrolled in and have not graduated from high school. Since, nearly 53% of the adult population with less than high school completion is female, one might expect a higher proportion of women in this sample. This was the case; about 58% of the examinees who participated were female. A comparison of these percentages is presented in Table 2.

Age

Since 1974 the annual percentage of adults who were less than 25 years old when tested has ranged from 58 to 65 percent. A complete breakdown of the age distribution for this sample is shown in Table 3. More than 50% of the examinees who completed the questionnaire were 21 years old or less. The mean age was 25.2 years. A slightly higher proportion of the adult sample was 19 years old or less when compared with previous annual statistics. This may have been due to the time of year during which the national survey was conducted.

Race

Results presented in Table 4 indicate that 79% of the GED examinee sample were white, about 18% were black, and 3% were other races. Based on Bureau of the Census estimates for 1980, it appears that the percentage of nonwhite examinees aged 16 years and over in this sample is about 1.7 times greater than the percentage of nonwhite adults aged 16 years and over in the U.S. population (see Table 5). Further, the percentage of nonwhite examinees 16 years old and over, non-high school graduate, and not enrolled in school in this sample is about 1.3 times greater than the percentage of comparable adults in the United States population.

Birthplace

As is clear from Table 6, nearly 93% of the sample tested during April and May 1980 were born in the United States. The next-highest percentages in birthplace were from Puerto Rico (.6%) and Germany (.6%). In all, candidates in the sample were born in more than 80 different countries.

Current or Most Recent Job

A total of 11,647 candidates responded to this item. The most frequent job category reported was service (nearly 20%), including such occupations as barber, beautician, teacher's aide, janitor, waitress, and waiter. The next most frequent job categories indicated were laborer (14%) (e.g., construction worker, car washer, sanitary worker, farm laborer,) and operative (12%) (e.g., meat cutter, assembler, welder). Nearly 14% of the examinees responded "homemaker". Only 5.5% of the GED examinees reported having "never worked". Thus, at least 80% of GED examinees were currently employed or had been at the time they took the tests. A complete breakdown of the responses to this question is presented in Table 7.

In comparing the candidate sample with the U.S. population, various occupations were combined in accordance with Bureau of the Census definitions. For comparison purposes, the four divisions were combined as follows: White Collar (clerical, manager, proprietor, technical, professional, and school teacher); Blue Collar (crafts, operative, military, and laborer); Service Workers (protective service, and service); and Farm Workers (farmer or farm manager). It was estimated that employed GED examinees are only about half as likely to be in white collar occupations as compared with the general U.S. population aged 16 years old and over. Comparisons of the examinee sample, those persons 16 years old and over, and those persons between 25 and 64 years old are shown in Figure 1. Caution is advised when interpreting this figure, since only 37 percent of the candidate sample was between 25 and 64 years old (see Table 2). However, in both the examinee sample and the U.S. adult population with less than high school completion, the largest percentages of employed adults with less than high school completion are in blue collar occupations.

Language

A complete breakdown of the languages spoken and written by the examinees both while growing up and today is provided in Table 8 and Table 9, respectively. When asked about the language spoken most frequently between the ages of 6 and 13, nearly 92% of the examinees indicated English.

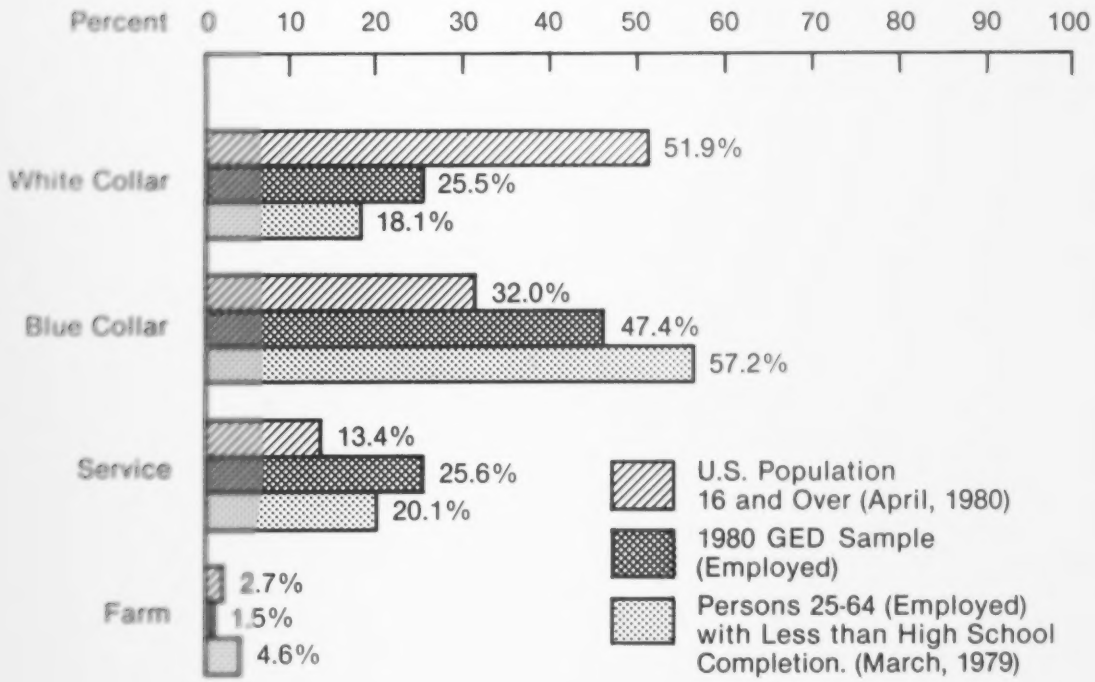

Figure 1. Percentage of Employed Adults by Type of Occupation (Refer to Table 7 for additional information)

Spanish was the second most frequent language (4.5%) listed by the candidates. In all, more than 50 different languages were listed. English was also written by about 96% of the candidates while they were growing up. Over 97% of the examinees who responded to the survey speak and write English most often today.

PREVIOUS SCHOOLING OF GED EXAMINEES

Highest Grade Completed

Results presented in Table 10 show that about 88% of the candidates indicated that they had completed the ninth grade or higher; nearly 70% had completed 10th grade or higher; but only about 37% of the sample had completed the 11th grade or higher.

Grades in School

In reporting their grades earned in school, nearly 11% of the examinees reported grades of at least "B+" (about half "A" and half "B"); about 23% reported grades of "C-" (half "C" and half "D") or below, which generally represent inadequate progress in school. Most examinees reported grades of "C" or better. It should be noted that these were self-reported grades and that no verification against high school records was made. Thus, these reports may be subject to some degree of distortion, by a tendency to over estimate earlier academic progress. A complete breakdown of the eight different grade categories is provided in Table 11.

Major Reason for Not Completing High School

About 41% of the candidates cited personal reasons (a broad classification that probably includes many different reasons) for not completing high school. Further, about 20% said that they needed to work, while another 13% attributed their not having completed high school to poor or unsatisfactory academic progress (see Table 12).

PREPARATION TO TAKE THE GED TESTS

Reason for Taking the Test

Table 13 shows the examinees' primary reasons for taking the GED Tests. About 39% of the candidates cited job related reasons as their primary reason for taking the GED Tests. Passing the GED Tests was essential for about 3% of the examinees to retain their present job. Nearly 30% of the sample took the tests in order to meet an admissions requirement for a college or vocational training program; about 25% of the examinees said that they took the tests primarily for personal satisfaction (i.e., their perfornce would not directly influence their job or admission to a specific educational program). Another 5% of the sample cited a military requirement as their primary motivation.

Kind of Preparation

About 46% of the sample attended a class in writing skills, social studies, science, reading skills or mathemtics. One-fifth of the examinees

attended review classes in all five areas. Additional results presented in Table 14 show that slightly more than 40% attended a class designed to improve their mathematical ability. About 22% of the examinees reported that they had taken the Official GED Practice Test. More than 40% said that they had studied from a book or manual designed for "GED Preparation". Only about 20% of the examinees said that they did not prepare in any for the GED Tests.

Amount of Preparation

About 80% of the sample attempted to estimate the number of total hours spent in preparation to take the GED. A grand total of 617,744 hours of preparation were estimated by 9338 examinees. However, 850 candidates did not provide a numerical estimate. Instead they provided responses such as "took a 6-week course," "a long time," "?," and "I don't remember." Although it was not possible to quantify such statements, these persons were included using a separate category in the frequency distribution presented in Table 15. Caution is advised when interpreting these results, since the total time spent preparing for the tests would most likely have been higher if all examinees had answered in terms of hours. Based on the remaining 9338 numerical values, the typical examinee reported spending about 20 hours in preparation for the tests. Seventy-five percent of the examinees reported spending 60 hours or less. About 5% reported more than 200 hours of preparation. The distribution is highly skewed; thus, the mean number of hours spent may be misleading and will not be reported here.

Candidates estimated that 132,353 hours were spent preparing for the tests during the two weeks immediately prior to testing. The typical examinee spent about 8 hours preparing for the tests during this two-week period. Seventy-five percent of the sample reported spending 16 hours or less preparing for the GED Tests during this period.

Again, due to the skewness of the distribution (34 examinees provided estimates that would have necessitated more than 12 hours/day preparation for 14 consecutive days), the mean number of hours spent preparing during the last two weeks before testing may be misleading and will not be reported here (see Table 16).

In order to clarify the degree to which preparation is concentrated in the two weeks immediately preceding the tests, an index was calculated

(based on the number of hours spent preparing during the last two weeks divided by the total number of hours preparing for the Tests). If the "total number of hours" was missing or equal to 0, the index was not computed. Thus, candidates who provided values for "two-week preparation," but no estimate of the "total hours" did not have an index computed. An index value of 100 indicates that all preparation for the GED occurred during the two weeks just prior to testing. The index was calculated for nearly 7200 examinees. Results presented in Table 17 show that nearly one-fifth of the candidates did all their preparation during the two weeks just prior to testing. For the typical examinee the amount of time spent preparing to take the tests during the two weeks just prior to testing, represented about 30% of their total time in preparation.

Cost of Preparation

Examinees were asked to estimate the amounts of money they had spent for various preparation efforts. Results shown in Table 18 indicate that for most examinees, the expenditures reported for preparation were modest. Considering both direct costs and lost wages, the typical examinee spent only about $10-12. Only about 5% of the candidates reported spending more than $100 in preparation for the tests. Transportation expenses comprised the largest percentage of the money spent by these candidates. Only 25% of the examinees reported spending at least $1 for books or manuals. Less than 9% of the sample reported out-of-pocket expenses on tuition for classroom instruction. Surprisingly, less than 1% incurred any expenses for individual tutoring. About 31% reported spending money for transportation. Moreover, only about 5% of the examinees reported any lost salary due to their absence from work in order to prepare for the GED Tests.

READING HABITS

The nature of the Social Studies, Science, and Reading Skills tests (with questions pertaining to figures, graphs, and brief reading passages) suggests that relationships may exist between examinee reading habits and test performance. Examinees were asked to indicate the kinds of materials that they read regularly and also to estimate the number of hours per week

they spend reading. Results presented in Table 19 show that more than 90% of the examinees read books, magazines, or newspapers at least once per week. Approximately 30% of the adults tested during the study said that they read all three on a regular basis. More than half of the examinees indicated that they read books on a regular basis while about 56% indicated that they read magazines or journals at least one per week. Newspapers were the most frequently cited material with approximately 75% of the candidates reading them at least once per week. Only about 8% said they were unable to read on a regular basis.

Amount of Time Spent Reading

No estimates of the specific amounts of time spent reading each of the above mentioned materials were obtained, however, candidates were asked to estimate the total number of hours per week spent reading. About 11,000 (88%) examinees responded to this item (see Table 20). The typical candidate spends about 8 hours per week reading. About 20% reported reading more than 14 hours per week.

Reasons for Reading

Examinees were asked to indicate their reasons for reading and to identify their most important reason. More than 60% said that they read for general knowledge. The next most frequent reason for reading was relaxation (50%). Almost 36% of the examinees indicated that most important reason for reading was for general knowledge. Another 17% cited pleasure/recreation, and 14% said that relaxation was their most important reason for reading (see Table 21).

Comparison with Other Studies on Adult Reading

One way to interpret these findings is to place them in perspective with previously conducted studies. John Guthrie (1979) cited a study conducted by the Book Industry Study Group (BISG) released in October 1978. In attempting to determine reasons for reading, telephone surveyors asked a nationally representative sample of about 1,450 adults 16 years old and older why they read. The major findings of the BSIG study and the National Survey of Spring 1980 Examinees are presented in Figure 2.

Although the GED sample was younger than the BISG sample (see Figure 3) the findings of the two studies were similar. For example, "general knowledge" ranked first in both studies as the most frequently cited reason for reading. Since there is some ambiguity in distinguishing between the categories "pleasure/recreation" and "relaxation," the rank order for the five most frequently reported reasons for reading (based on obtained frequencies) would have been identical for both samples. Age differences between the samples may also account for differences in the various percentages. The most likely explanation for the higher percentage of adults in the examinee sample who read "to fulfill educational requirements" than the BISG sample is simply that adults in the examinee sample were pursuing a high school credential. Thus, there would be a much greater likelihood of reading GED preparation materials among the examinees in the GED sample than among those in the BISG sample.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

More than 50% of the examinees were 21 years old or younger. It appears that most examinees do prepare for the tests; however, out-of-pocket expenses for GED preparation were, in general, relatively modest. Most persons reported reading books, magazines or newspapers on a regular basis. The typical examinee spent about 8 hours per week reading.

Since this study represents the first time such a comprehensive sampling of examinees has been conducted, direct comparisons with previous research studies cannot be made. However, more than 70% of the adults participating in this survey agreed to be contacted for a follow-up study. Persons interested in conducting future research studies related to the GED Tests, especially follow-up investigations of GED examinees, are encouraged to contact the authors.

Subsequent reports in this series will examine the relationships of test performance to age, gender, method of test preparation, and reading habits.

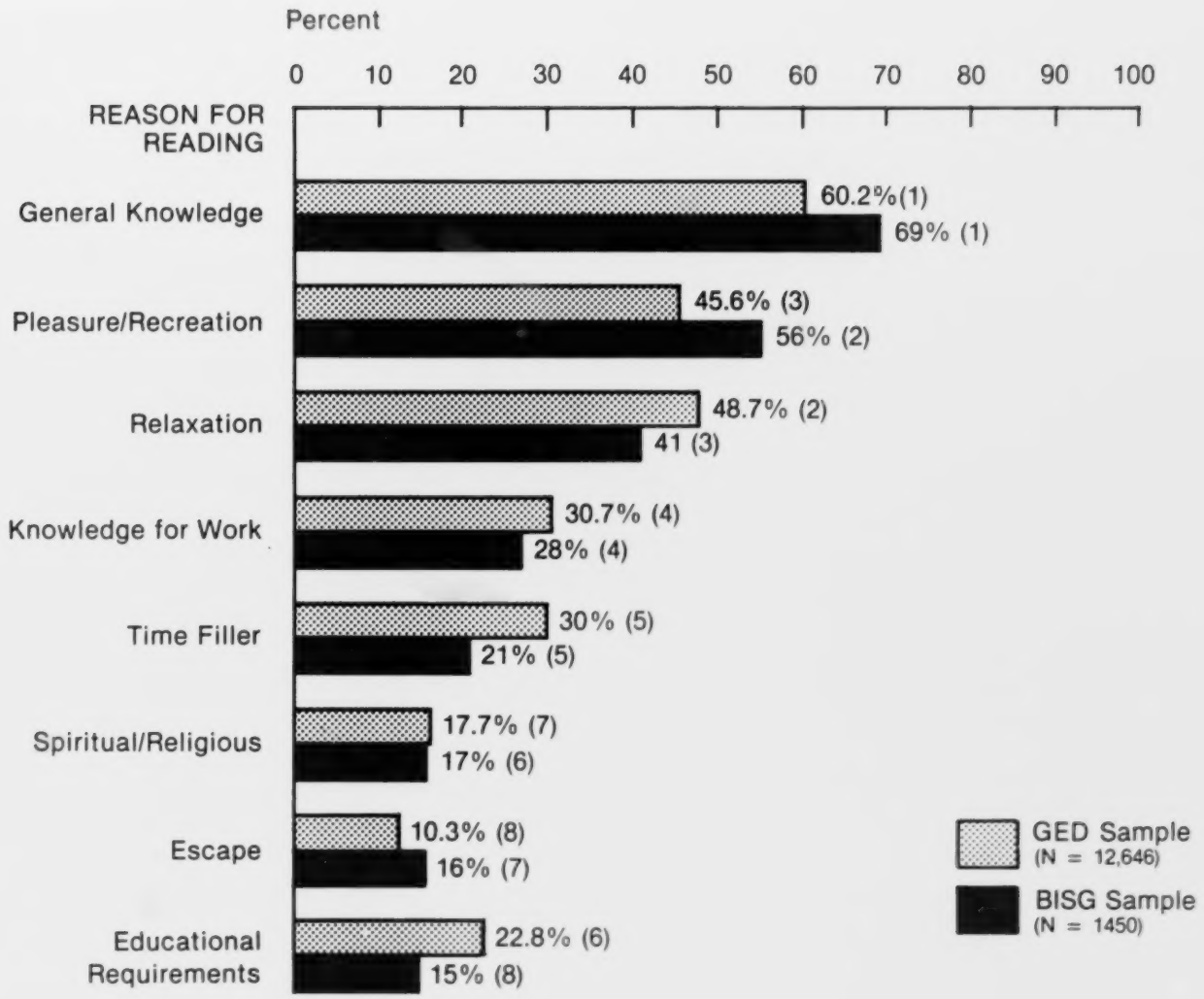

Figure 2. Reasons for Reading: Comparisons Between GED and BISG Samples. (Numbers in parentheses represent rank orders based on frequencies)

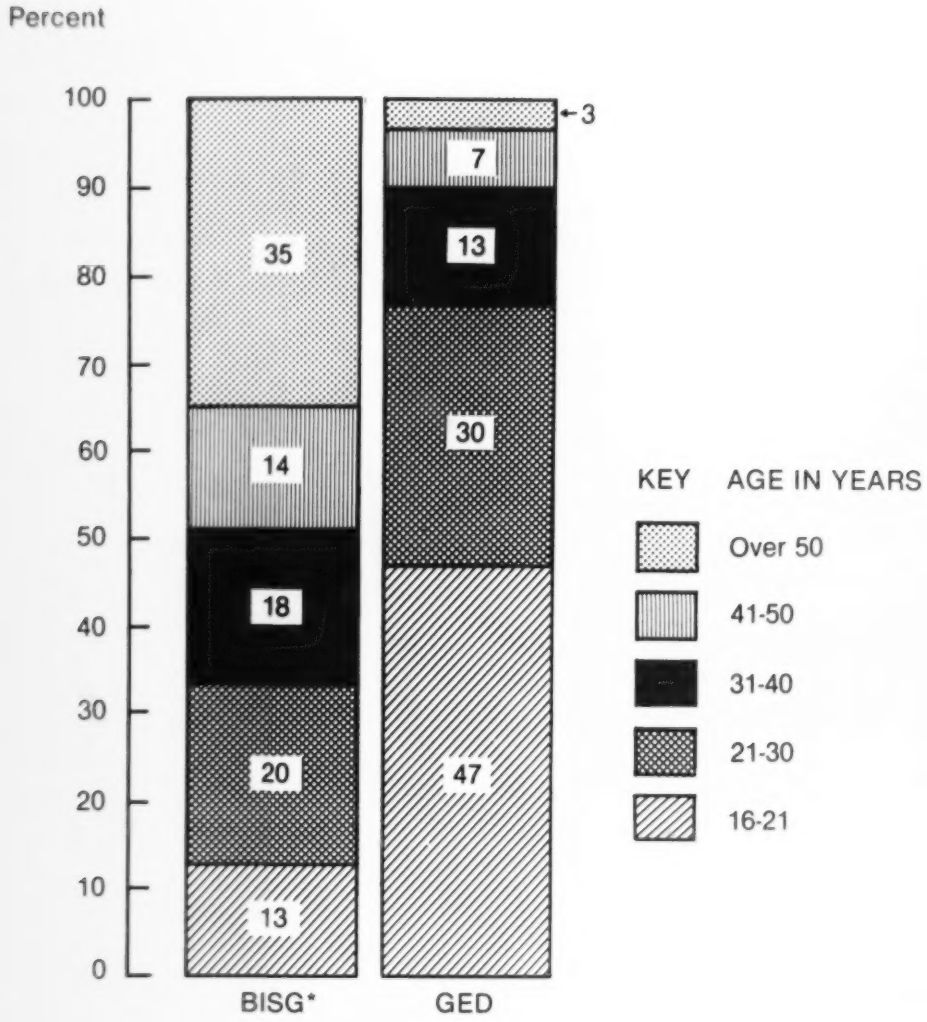

Figure 3. Comparison of Age Distribution Between BISG and GED Candidate Samples
*Source: BISG Report No. 6, p. 7

Table 1

Number of Examinees Completing Survey by State

State	# of Centers[a]	# of Examinees	Percent	State	# of Centers	# of Examinees	Percent
Alabama	5	293	2.32	Montana	2	76	.60
Alaska	1	11	.09	Nebraska	4	51	.40
Arizona	4	230	1.82	Nevada	1	5	.05
Arkansas	8	107	.85	New Hampshire	2	75	.59
California	19	735	5.81	New Jersey	3	232	1.83
Colorado	3	132	1.04	New Mexico	2	124	.98
Connecticut	1	72	.57	New York	8	1744	13.78
Delaware	1	48	.38	North Carolina	8	404	3.20
District of Columbia	1	52	.41	North Dakota	1	65	.51
Florida	7	695	5.50	Ohio	5	196	1.55
Georgia	7	299	2.37	Oklahoma	5	130	1.03
Hawaii	1	59	.47	Oregon	4	183	1.45
Idaho	1	66	.52	Pennsylvania	9	874	6.91
Illinois	6	415	3.28	Rhode Island	2	194	1.53
Indiana	7	267	2.11	South Carolina	2	90	.71
Iowa	5	118	.93	South Dakota	2	11	.09
Kansas	5	306	2.42	Tennessee	2	364	2.88
Kentucky	4	136	1.08	Texas	15	1156	9.14
Louisiana	5	192	1.52	Utah	1	12	.10
Maine	4	63	.50	Vermont	2	11	.09
Maryland	2	119	.94	Virginia	4	297	2.35
Massachusetts	3	312	2.47	Washington	5	296	2.34
Michigan	14	255	2.02	West Virginia	5	196	1.55
Minnesota	5	195	1.54	Wisconsin	5	328	2.59
Mississippi	5	139	1.10	Wyoming	3	53	.42
				Total	229	12644	100

[a] A total of 229 centers participated. Of the 243 centers originally selected, at least 6 did not conduct any testing during the period. Therefore the participation rate was greater than 96%. Refer to Appendix B for a complete description of the sampling procedures.

Table 2

Comparison of GED Candidate Sample and U.S. Adult Populations

	GED Examinees		U.S. Population		U.S. Population (Less than H.S. Completion)	
Gender	Frequency	Percent	Frequency[a]	Percent	Frequency[b]	Percent
Male	5329	42.25	80727	47.96	21665	47.22
Female	7284	57.75	87607	52.04	24217	52.78
Totals	12613	100.0	168334	100.0	45882	100.0

[a]Frequencies are in thousands. Numbers represent person 16 years old and over. Source: Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 704, p. 40.

[b]Frequencies are in thousands. Numbers represent non-high school graduates 16 years old and over not currently enrolled in school.
Sources: Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 356, pp. 21-24 and Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 355 (Advance Report), p-7. The assumption was made that persons 35 years old and over were not currently enrolled in school.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution for Age of GED Examinees

N	12298	SKEWNESS	1.54
MEAN	25.25	MEDIAN	21
SD	9.93	MODE	18

FREQUENCY TABLE

AGE	COUNT	PERCENTS CELL	CUM	AGE	COUNT	PERCENTS CELL	CUM
15	51	0.4	0.4	45	50	0.4	93.9
16	572	4.7	5.1	46	110	0.9	94.8
17	1488	12.1	17.2	47	49	0.4	95.2
18	1666	13.5	30.7	48	51	0.4	95.6
19	1150	9.4	40.1	49	97	0.8	96.4
20	794	6.5	46.5	50	39	0.3	96.7
21	602	4.9	51.4	51	83	0.7	97.4
22	534	4.3	55.8	52	45	0.4	97.8
23	473	3.8	59.6	53	61	0.5	98.3
24	400	3.3	62.9	54	28	0.2	98.5
25	373	3.0	65.9	55	31	0.3	98.7
26	296	2.4	68.3	56	32	0.3	99.0
27	280	2.3	70.6	57	13	0.1	99.1
28	283	2.3	72.9	58	26	0.2	99.3
29	213	1.7	74.6	59	7	0.1	99.4
30	296	2.4	77.0	60	13	0.1	99.5
31	185	1.5	78.5	61	5	0.0	99.5
32	283	2.3	80.8	62	9	0.1	99.6
33	150	1.2	82.0	63	11	0.1	99.7
34	107	0.9	82.9	64	2	0.0	99.7
35	226	1.8	84.7	65	10	0.1	99.8
36	130	1.1	85.8	67	11	0.1	99.9
37	193	1.6	87.4	68	3	0.0	99.9
38	107	0.9	88.2	69	3	0.0	99.9
39	169	0.5	90.1	70	3	0.0	99.9
40	64	0.5	90.1	72	1	0.0	100.0
41	73	0.6	90.7	74	3	0.0	100.0
42	149	1.2	91.9	75	1	0.0	100.0
43	61	0.5	92.4	77	2	0.0	100.0
44	131	1.1	93.5				

Note. Age was calculated by truncating the difference between test date and birth date. This is based on the tradition that a person "17.6 years old" would still be considered a "17 year old."

Table 4

Race/Ethnic Background of GED Examinees

RACE/ETHNIC BACKGROUND	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
*Asian or Pacific Islander[a]	156	1.30
*American Indian or Alaskan Native	321	2.69
*Black	2043	17.10
Black Hispanic	11	.09
Black/White	5	.04
*Hispanic[b]	699	5.85
Mexican American[b]	79	.66
Puerto Rican[b]	7	.06
*White[b]	8422	70.50
White Hispanic[b]	22	.18
*Other[c]	182	1.52

Note. Those categories marked with an asterisk (*) were actual options on the survey. The remaining categories were formed by marking two options on the survey.

[a] Includes: Black/Pacific Islander (1) and White/Pacific Islander (4)

[b] Prior to the 1980 Census, each of these categories were combined under the general classification of "white " all others were combined into the general classification "Non-white" or "Black and other races."

[c] Responses to this category included: "American," "German," "Italian," and other "ethnic backgrounds." Race was not estimated for this category. All future reference to "Race/Ethnic Background" will be based on the 11,765 usuable responses.

Table 5

Race/Ethnic Background Comparisons for GED Examinees, and Adult U.S. Populations

	GED Examinees		U.S. Population		U.S. Population (Less than H.S. Completion)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency[c]	Percent	Frequency[d]	Percent
White[a]	9229	78.44	147113	87.4	37598	83.9
Black and Other Races[b]	2536	21.56	21222	12.6	7203	16.1
Totals	11765	100.00	168335	100.0	44801	100.0

[a]In accordance with Bureau of the Census definitions, this category includes: Hispanic, Mexican American, Puerto Rican, White, and White Hispanic (see Table 3).

[b]Similarly, this category includes: Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Black, Black Hispanic, and Black/White (see Table 3).

[c]Frequencies are in thousands. Numbers represent persons 16 years old and over. Source: CPR, Series P-25, No. 704, p. 40.

[d]Frequencies are in thousands. Numbers represent non-high school graduates 16 years old and over, not currently enrolled in school. completion. Sources: CPR, Series P-20, No. 356, pp. 20-24 and CPR, Series P-20, No. 355 (Advance Report), p. 7. The assumption was made that persons 35 years old and over were not currently enrolled in school earning credits toward a high school diploma.

Table 6

Birthplaces of GED Candidates

COUNTRY	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
United States	10601	92.89
Puerto Rico	69	.61
Germany	65	.57
West Indies	62	.54
Philippines	47	.41
Mexico	46	.40
Trinidad	34	.30
Haiti	34	.30
Canada	31	.27
England	31	.27
Vietnam	29	.25
Jamaica	24	.21
Italy	23	.20
Dominican Republic	22	.11
Cuba	21	.18
Other Countries*(65)	320	2.8

Note. *Other Countries include the following (numbers in parentheses indicate frequency for those countries grouped together): Guyana (16); Columbia, France (14); Portugal (12); Iran, Korea (11); Ireland (9); China, Egypt, Greece, India, Panama (8); Honduras, Hong Kong, South Africa (7); Japan, Netherlands, Somoa (6); Australia, Ecvador, Nigeria, Yugoslavia (5); Bahamas, Belize, El Salvador, Hungary, Lebanon, Russia, Scotland (4); Africa, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Pakistan (3); Afghanistan, Argentina, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Laos, Malaysia, Peru, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Uraguay, Venezula (2); Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Cambodia, Fiji Islands, Guam, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tahiti, Ukraine, Yemen (1).

Table 7

Current or Most Recent Job
and Occupation Types of GED Examinees

JOB	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Clerical	1293	11.102
Crafts	999	8.577
Farmer or Farm Mgr.	142	1.219
Homemaker	1597	13.712
Laborer	1642	14.089
Manager	368	3.160
Military	415	3.563
Operative	1400	12.020
Proprietor	179	1.537
Protective Service	134	1.151
Service	2276	19.542
Technical	208	1.786
Professional	261	2.241
School Teacher	89	0.764
Never Worked	644	5.529
	Total 11647	100.000

Percentage of Adults by Major Occupation Type

	GED Examinees	Percentage U.S. Population	Percentage U.S. Population (Less than H.S. Completion)
White Collar	25.5	51.9	18.1
Blue Collar	47.4	32.0	57.2
Service Workers	25.6	13.4	20.0
Farm Workers	1.5	2.7	4.6

Note. Refer to text for category definitions. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

[a] Percentages reflect household data (seasonally adjusted) for employed persons ages 16 years old and over. Source: Employment and Earnings, September 1980, Vol. 27, no. 9, p. 47.

[b] Percentages reflect employed persons 25 to 64 years old, non-high school graduate. Source: CPR, Series P-20, No. 356, p 36.

Table 8

Languages spoken between Ages 6-18 and at Present

Language	Ages 6-13 Frequency	Ages 6-13 Percent	Today Frequency	Today Percent
English	10,949	91.86	11,408	97.44
Spanish	532	4.46	184	1.57
French	66	.55	13	.11
German	53	.45	10	.08
Italian	37	.31	13	.11
Dutch	31	.20	3	.03
Others	251 [a]	2.17	65 [b]	.56
Totals	11,919	100.00	11,708	100.00

[a]Includes the following languages: Afrikaans, Arabic, Aramaic, Burmese, Chinese (23), Czech, Farsi, Fijian, Finnish, Greek, Guamanian, Gujarti, Haitian Creole, Hawaiian, Hebrew, Hindi, Ilcano, Indian (14), Indonesian, Iranian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Lebenese, Persian, Philipino (17), Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Serbo Croatian, Sign Language, Swedish, Tagalog (14), Tahitian, Telegu, Thai, Turkish, Ukranian, Urdi, Vietnamese (24), Yugoslavian. The numbers in parentheses represent frequencies which, unless indicated, ranged from 1 to 8.

[b]Includes the following languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Farsi, Greek, Ilcano, Indonesian, Iranian, Korean, Lao, Lebanese, Persian, Philipino, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Sign, Tagalog, Telegu, Ukranian, Urdi, Vietnamese (15) (Unless indicated, frequencies ranged from 1 to 7).

Table 9

Languages Written Between Ages 6-13 and at Present

Language	Ages 6-13 Frequency	Ages 6-13 Percent	Today Frequency	Today Percent
English	11,386	96.08	11,611	98.45
Spanish	185	1.56	98	.83
French	48	.41	12	.10
German	33	.28	13	.11
Italian	26	.22	10	.0[a]
Vietnamese	22	.19	12	.10
Others	150 [a]	1.26	38 [b]	.32
Totals	11,850	100.00	11,794	100.00

[a] Includes the following languages: Afrikaans, Arabic, Aramaic, Burmese, Chinese (19), Czech, Dutch (15), Farsi, Fijian, Greek, Guamanian, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Ilcano, Indonesian, Iranian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Lebanese, Malay, Persian, Philipino, Polish, Portuguese (12), Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Serbo Croatian, Swedish, Tagalog (11), Telegu, Thai, Turkish, Ukranian, Urdi, Yugoslavian (unless indicated, frequencies ranged from 1 to 7).

[b] Includes the following languages: Arabic, Aramaic, Chinese (5), Czech, Dutch, Fijian, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Ilcano, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Persian, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Tagalog, Telegu, Turkish, Ukranian, Urdi (unless indicated, frequencies ranged from 1 to 3).

Table 10

Highest Grade Completed

Grade	Frequency	Cum Freq.	Percent	Cum Percent
Sixth or less	142	142	1.147	1.147
Seventh	276	418	2.229	3.376
Eighth	1117	1535	9.020	12.396
Ninth	2359	3894	19.050	31.446
Tenth	3914	7808	31.608	63.054
Eleventh	3992	11800	32.238	95.292
Twelfth	583	12383	4.708	100.000

Note. Many of those who reported twelfth grade as highest grade completed indicated that they had "completed high school in a foreign country," "high school records were lost," or "only 1 credit from graduation."

Table 11

Grades in School

Grades	Frequency	Cum Freq.	Percent	Cum Percent
Mostly A	226	226	1.842	1.842
About Half A and Half B	1082	1308	8.821	10.664
Mostly B	1548	2856	12.620	23.284
About Half B and Half C	3508	6364	28.599	51.883
Mostly C	3062	9426	24.963	76.847
About Half C and Half D	2042	11468	16.648	93.494
Mostly D	557	12025	4.541	98.035
Mostly Below D	241	12266	1.965	100.000

Table 12

Reason for Not Completing High School

	Frequency	Percent
Completed H.S. in a foreign country[a]	130	1.06
High School was not challenging	661	5.39
Needed to work to support self/others	2297	18.74
Became very sick	300	2.45
Not doing well in classes	1602	13.07
Entered the armed forces	552	4.50
Personal reasons	5003	40.81
Pregnant/Married [b]	786	6.41
Parents ill/deceased[b]	99	.81
Other	824	6.75
Total	12,254	99.99

Note. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

[a]130 candidates indicated that they either had "completed high school in a foreign country," "high school records were lost," or "only lacked 1 credit."

[b]885 examinees reported either "pregnant" or "got married," "Parents were ill," or "parents deceased" in the space provided on the questionnaire for "other."

Table 13

Reason for Taking the GED

Reason	Frequency	Percent
Present Job Requirement	403	3.3
Future Job Requirement	4373	35.3
Educational Admission Requirement	3607	29.1
Personal Satisfaction	3080	24.9
Military Requirement	673	5.4
Other	252	2.0
Total	12,388	100.0

Table 14

Test Preparation of GED Examinees

Kind of Preparation	Frequency	Percent[b]
Attended class [a] to improve abilities in:		
Writing	3523	27.9
Social Studies	3788	30.1
Science	3687	29.2
Reading	4424	35.0
Mathematics	5095	40.3
Test Taking	2632	20.8
Worked with individual tutor	862	6.8
Took official GED Practice Test	2793	22.1
Studied from book or manual	5119	40.5
Watched GED Preparation Classes (PBS)	266	2.1
Did not prepare in any way	2615	20.7

[a]Approximately 46% of the examinees attend a class to improve their abilities in either Writing, Social Studies, Science, Reading, or Mathematics. Nearly 21% attended classes in all five areas.

[b]Percentages are based on the entire sample (12646). Percentages do not total 100 since many examinees reported more than one preparation activity.

Table 15

Estimated Amount of Preparation by GED Examinees

Total Hours	Frequency	Percent
None	1540	15.1
1-10	2001	19.7
11-20	1207	11.9
21-30	803	7.9
31-40	700	6.9
41-50	572	5.6
51-60	409	4.0
61-70	142	1.4
71-80	351	3.4
81-90	180	1.8
91-100	334	3.3
101-150	388	3.8
151-200	259	2.5
Over 200 Hours	452	4.4
Other[a]	840	8.3
Total	10,178	100.0

[a]These included responses such as "?," "too little," "I don't know," or some other indication that some preparation did occur. Most frequent number of hours were: 0 (1540); 20 (513); 40 (416); 10 (400); 30 (387); 60 (305); 50 (294); 4 (264). The numbers in parentheses represent obtained frequencies for the eight different hour values.)

Table 16

Hours Spent Preparing for GED During Last Two Weeks

Hours	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
None	2297	24.0	24.0
1-5	1779	18.5	42.5
6-10	1946	20.3	62.8
11-15	871	9.1	71.9
16-20	794	8.3	80.2
21-25	340	3.6	83.8
26-30	334	3.5	87.3
31-40	326	3.4	90.7
Over 40 Hours [a]	680	7.1	97.8
Other [b]	210	2.2	100.0
Total	9577	100.0	

[a]Ten examinees provided responses that were greater than the total number of possible hours during the two week perod (336); another 24 candidates reported values that implied an average daily value greater than 12 hours/day for 14 days (i.e., values greater than 168).

[b]This category includes responses such as "?," "I don't know," etc.

Table 17

Index Reflecting Concentration of Preparation for the GED

Index Value		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent [a]
0		882	12.3	12.3
1.0 - 15.0		1329	18.5	30.8
15.1 - 30.0	Median=28.5	1487	20.7	51.5
30.1 - 45.0		790	11.0	62.5
45.1 - 60.0		661	9.2	71.7
60.1 - 75.0		273	3.8	75.5
75.1 - 99.9		115	1.6	77.1
100		1397	19.4	96.5

Note. Refer to discussion in text regarding how the index was computed.

[a]Approximately 3.5% reported hours spent during the two weeks prior to testing greater than their "total hours."

Table 18

Estimated Costs for GED Preparation as Reported by Examinees

Area	# of Adults Responding	# of Adults Reporting[b] 1 or more expense	Percentiles[a] Median	75%	95%
Books/ Manuals	5598	3177 (25.1%)	$5	$8	$24
Tuition/Instruction	3255	1060 (8.4%)	$0	$8	$40
Individual Tutor	2349	98 (.8%)	$0	$0	$0
Transportation	5545	3941 (31.2%)	$10	$24	$80
Lost Salary	2279	675 (5.3%)	$0	$0	$75
Money Direct[c]	7971	6050 (47.8%)	$10	$25	$100
Money Total[d]	8171	6263 (49.5%)	$10	$30	$106

[a]These dollar figures are based on the number of adults responding to this item.

[b]The percentages are based on the entire sample (12646).

[c]This variable was formed by summing the amounts of money spent for each area (except "lost salary"). Thus, about 48% of all examinees reported out-of-pocket expenses of at least $1.

[d]This variable was formed by summing the amounts of money spent for each area including "lost salary."

Table 19

Types of Materials Read by GED Examinees[a]

Materials	Frequency	Percent[b]
Books/Manuals	6483	51.3
Magazines/Journals	7094	56.2
Newspapers	9434	74.6
Unable to read regularly	989	7.8

Note: About 90.5% of all examinees reported that they read at least one of the above on a regular basis; 61.0% read at least two of the above; 30.4% reported that they read all three types of materials regularly.

[a]Examinees were asked to "describe materials that you are able to read at least once per week."

[b]Percentages are based on the entire sample (12646).

Table 20

Estimated Amount of Time Per Week Spent Reading

Frequency Table

Hours/Week	Frequency	Percents Cell	Percents Cumulative	Hours/Week	Frequency	Percents Cell	Percents Cumulative
0	176	1.6	1.6	29	4	0.0	92.5
1	398	3.6	5.2	30	223	2.0	94.6
2	836	7.6	12.8	31	2	0.0	94.6
3	725	6.6	19.3	32	13	0.1	94.7
4	741	6.7	26.0	33	4	0.0	94.7
5	1177	10.7	36.7	34	6	0.1	94.8
6	633	5.7	42.4	35	68	0.6	95.4
7	666	6.0	48.5	36	11	0.1	95.5
8	579	5.2	53.7	37	4	0.0	95.5
9	117	1.1	54.8	38	3	0.0	95.6
10	1444	13.1	67.8	39	1	0.0	95.6
11	57	0.5	68.3	40	139	1.3	96.8
12	388	3.5	71.9	42	15	0.1	97.0
13	70	0.6	72.5	43	1	0.0	97.0
14	396	3.6	76.1	44	1	0.0	97.0
15	477	4.3	80.4	45	17	0.2	97.1
16	84	0.8	81.2	48	64	0.6	97.7
17	29	0.3	81.4	49	1	0.0	97.7
18	80	0.7	82.1	50	46	0.4	98.2
19	7	0.1	82.2	51	1	0.0	98.2
20	637	5.8	88.0	52	3	0.0	98.2
21	104	0.9	88.9	54	2	0.0	98.2
22	18	0.2	89.1	55	6	0.1	98.3
23	24	0.2	89.3	over 55[a]	195	1.7	100.0
24	120	1.1	90.4				
25	164	1.5	91.9				
26	3	0.0	91.9				
27	11	0.1	92.0				
28	58	0.5	92.5				

[a] Six candidates reported values greater than the number of hours in one week. An additional 66 reported valued that suggested they read, on the average, more than 12 hours/day (Median = 8 hours; 95% of candidates read less than 35 hours/week). Further, 150 provided non-quantifiable responses (e.g., "all the time," "a lot").

Table 21

Reasons for Reading

Reasons	Frequency	Percent[b]	Most Important Reason[a] Frequency	Percent
Time Filler	3800	30.0	579	5.9
Relaxation	6163	48.7	1366	14.0
General Knowledge	7616	60.2	3488	35.7
Escape	1301	10.3	160	1.6
Educational Requirements	2886	22.8	693	7.1
Spiritual/Religious	2245	17.8	534	5.5
Pleasure/Recreation	5775	45.7	1646	16.8
Knowledge for Work	3893	30.8	1119	11.4
Other	436	3.4	191	2.0
			Total 9776	100.0

[a]Percentages for "Most Important Reason" are based on the N of 9776. About 1700 examinees reported one reason for reading, but did not mark a "most important reason." In these instances, the one reason given was assumed to be the most important reason for reading.

[b]Percentages are based on the entire sample (12646).

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The General Educational Development Testing Service

OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION ONE DUPONT CIRCLE WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036

Dear Candidate,

The GED Testing Program (High School Equivalency) has grown considerably during the past 10 years. Nearly one-half million adults took the GED Tests during 1979. Approximately twelve percent of all high school credentials awarded in the United States last year were based on GED Test results. Yet, because information about people taking the GED is not routinely collected or summarized, no clear national picture is available for either their characteristics or test performance. Persons who attempt to qualify for a high school credential based on GED Test results are an important segment of our educational system. Completing this survey will help us learn more about you.

This information will provide valuable insight into the wide range of experiences reflected in your background, and how they may be related to your GED Test results. In addition, your answers to this questionnaire will be very helpful in the development of future GED tests.

Adults tested at more than 250 different centers thoughout the country have been asked to participate in this survey. However, only about 2 percent of those who take the GED during 1980 will be asked these questions. This means that it is very important that you answer each question as accurately as you can. YOUR RESPONSES WILL NOT INFLUENCE YOUR GED TEST SCORES OR THE EVALUATION OF THOSE SCORES BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT THAT GRANTS THE HIGH SCHOOL CREDENTIAL, AND THEY WILL REMAIN STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY WILL BE SENT DIRECTLY TO OUR OFFICE FOR ANALYSIS AND DESTROYED WHEN THE STUDY IS FINISHED. No individual results will be reported; only group statistics will be published. If you have any general comments regarding the GED, please write them in the space provided on the last page of the questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Henry A. Spille

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Director

The GED Testing Service operates under the policy direction of the Commission on Educational Credit, formerly the Commission on Accreditation of Service Experiences, of the American Council on Education

Your social security number and name are necessary for matching your questionnaire responses with your test scores.

2-10 *Please print clearly.* Social security number: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Birth date: _____ [44-
MONTH DAY YEAR

Today's date: _____ [50-
MONTH DAY YEAR

17-43 Name: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐
LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE INITIAL

Your completed survey will be sent directly to our office for analysis and destroyed when the study is finished. Please ignore the numbers printed in the margins of each question. They are for keypunching purposes only.

Which of the following GED subtests have you already completed? ***(Mark all that apply.)***

56 ☐ None
57 ☐ TEST 1 (Writing Skills); which year? _____ [58-59]
60 ☐ TEST 2 (Social Studies); which year? _____ [61-62]
63 ☐ TEST 3 (Science); which year? _____ [64-65]
66 ☐ TEST 4 (Reading Skills); which year? _____ [67-68]
69 ☐ TEST 5 (Mathematics); which year? _____ [70-71]

Which one item best describes your reason for taking the GED? ***(Please mark only one box.)***

72
- ☐ a Present job requirement. (Passing the GED will let me keep my present job.)
- ☐ b Future job requirement. (Passing the GED will let me qualify for future job opportunities.)
- ☐ c To meet an admission requirement for a college and/or vocational training program.
- ☐ d Own personal satisfaction. (My performance will not directly influence my job or admission to a specific educational program.)
- ☐ e Military requirement. (Passing the GED will let me enter the military.)
- ☐ f Other, please explain _____

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'2' In preparing for the GED, some adults have used study guides, manuals, private tutors, or have taken special review classes while others have not prepared or "studied" for the GED before taking it. The next questions are about the way you prepared for the GED.

Please mark each item that describes a way you prepared for the GED.(Mark as many boxes as apply.)

I attended a class designed to improve my abilities in:

11-16 ☐ Writing ☐ Social Studies ☐ Science ☐ Reading ☐ Mathematics ☐ Test Taking

17 ☐ I worked with an individual tutor.
18 ☐ I took the "Official GED Practice Test" provided by the GED Testing Service.
19 ☐ I studied from a book/manual designed for "GED preparation" (other than those published by the GED Testing Service).
20 ☐ I watched GED preparation programs on Public Television (PBS).
21 ☐ I did not prepare in any way to take the GED.

22-25 About how many total hours did you spend preparing to take the GED? _____ (HOURS)

26-29 About how many of these hours were spent during the past two weeks? _____ (HOURS)

Please indicate about how many dollars you spent in each of the following areas in preparing to take the GED.

30-32 I spent about . . . _____ for books, or practice manuals.
33-35 _____ for tuition for classroom instruction.
36-38 _____ for an individual tutor.
39-41 _____ for transportation (such as gas and oil, bus fare used in traveling to a review class).
42-44 _____ in lost salary because I had to miss work or leave early.

Please indicate the highest grade that you completed while you were in school. *Mark only one box.*

45-46
- ☐ Sixth or less
- ☐ Seventh
- ☐ Eighth
- ☐ Ninth
- ☐ Tenth
- ☐ Eleventh
- ☐ Twelfth

Which of the following best describes your grades while you were in school? *Mark only one box.*

47
- [1] Mostly A (a numerical average of 90-100)
- [2] About half A and half B (85-89)
- [3] Mostly B (80-84)
- [4] About half B and half C (75-79)
- [5] Mostly C (70-74)
- [6] About half C and half D (65-69)
- [7] Mostly D (60-64)
- [8] Mostly below D (below 60)

There are many possible reasons for not completing high school. Some adults may have been sick or had to work because of financial responsibilities. Others may have entered the armed forces. Which **one** item **best** describes your reason for not completing high school.

Mark only one box.

48
- [1] I found that high school was not challenging enough.
- [2] I needed to work in order to support myself or others.
- [3] I became very sick.
- [4] I was not doing well in high school classes.
- [5] I entered the armed forces.
- [6] I did not complete high school for personal reasons.
- [7] Other, please explain _____

49-51 Some adults are able to read the newspaper regularly, others read magazines and/or books. Many do not have enough time to read regularly. About how many total hours per week are you able to spend reading? (Include newspapers, books, magazines and technical reports or manuals.) _____ HOURS PER WEEK

Please mark each of the following items which describe materials that you are able to read at least once per week.

Mark as many boxes as apply.

52 ☐ Books/Manuals ☐ Newspapers [54]

53 ☐ Magazines/Journals ☐ I am unable to read any of these regularly. [55]

Those people who are able to read do so for many different reasons. For example, some adults might read for pleasure while others might read because it is required by their job. Please mark **all** items in the first column which describe a reason why you read, then mark the **one** box in the second column which best describes the single-most important reason why you read.

	I READ FOR THESE REASONS: *(Mark all that apply)*	THE ONE MOST-IMPORTANT REASON IS *(Mark only one)*	
56	☐ Time Filler	[a]	
57	☐ Relaxation	[b]	
58	☐ General Knowledge	[c]	
59	☐ Escape	[d]	[65]
60	☐ Fulfill Educational Requirements	[e]	
61	☐ Spiritual/Religious	[f]	
62	☐ Pleasure/Recreation	[g]	
63	☐ Knowledge for Work/Career	[h]	
64	☐ Other, _____	[i]	

HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

GENDER:

[M] Male
[F] Female

[66]

RACE/ETHNIC BACKGROUND *(Mark as many as apply)*

[a] American Indian or Alaskan Native
[b] Asian or Pacific Islander
[c] Black
[d] Hispanic
[e] White
[f] Other _____ [67]
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

BIRTHPLACE: ☐ USA ☐ Other Country *(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)* _____ [68-69]

PLEASE DESCRIBE BELOW THE PRIMARY JOB YOU CURRENTLY HOLD OR MOST RECENTLY HELD.
Mark only one box.

[70]

[a] Clerical (such as bank teller, typist, secretary, ticket agent, mail carrier).
[b] Crafts (such as baker, painter, plumber, automobile mechanic, telephone installer, carpenter).
[c] Farmer, or farm manager.
[d] Homemaker.
[e] Laborer (such as construction worker, car washer, sanitary worker, farm laborer).
[f] Manager (such as sales manager, office manager, school administrator, buyer, government official).
[g] Military (such as career officer or enlisted man or woman in the armed forces).
[h] Operative (such as meat cutter, assembler, machine operator, welder, taxicab, bus, or truck driver).
[i] Proprietor or owner (such as owner of small business, contractor, restaurant owner).
[j] Protective Service (such as detective, guard, or fire fighter).
[k] Service (such as barber, beautician, practical nurse, teacher's aide, private household worker, janitor, waitress, waiter).
[l] Technical (such as drafting, medical or dental technician, computer operator or programmer).
[m] Professional (such as accountant, artist, registered nurse, writer, engineer, librarian, social worker, actor, actress, athlete, politician).
[n] School Teacher (such as preschool, elementary, or secondary).
[o] Never worked.

For many adults, English was not the language used most often when they were children. Although they may speak/write English most frequently today, they spoke/wrote another language as they were growing up.

Mark only one box for each question.

Between the ages of 6 and 13, which one language did you SPEAK most often at home?
☐ English ☐ Other _____ [71-72]
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Which one language do you speak most often today? ☐English ☐ Other _____ [73-74]
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Between the ages of 6 and 13, which one language did you WRITE most often?
☐ English ☐ Other _____ [75-76]
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Which one language do you write most often today? ☐ English ☐ Other _____ [77-78]
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

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'3' Thank you for answering these questions. Because our interest in you extends beyond the time you complete the test, the GED Testing Service may wish to contact you within the next 12 months regarding your attitudes and opinions about your "GED Experience." We will do so, however, only if you check yes and give your address. (You will be contacted only once.)

[Y] Yes, I would be willing to have you contact me for a follow-up study.

11 NAME _____
PLEASE PRINT

PERMANENT ADDRESS _____ [12-32]

APT. (NO.) _____ [33-48]

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ [49-76]

[N] No, please do not contact me in any later studies.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The random selection of Centers to participate in the study was accomplished through the following steps:

- Based on the 1978 Annual Statistical Reports submitted by Official GED Testing Centers, a population of 2422 centers in the United States was available. This figure did not include V.A. Hospitals.

- Within each state, the centers were sorted (high to low) by volume of 1978 testing.

- Within each state, this sorted population of centers was divided into subpopulations (blocks) of 10 centers each.

- Within each block, a primary center to be contacted initially and a corresponding back-up center (to be contacted if the primary center was not available for participation) were randomly selected using a FORTRAN computer program in conjunction with a random number generator. These stratification and selection procedures provided a sample of centers within each state which was proportional to the volume of testing conducted during 1978.

- Preliminary statistical reports for 1979 indicated that 15 of the primary centers had closed during 1979. In each case the corresponding backup center was substituted, and new backup centers were chosen randomly from the 8 remaining centers within the original block of 10.

- These 243 centers were contacted to ascertain whether any testing was planned for April or May, 1980 and to secure participation if testing was scheduled.

- Of the 243 centers originally contacted, 18 planned no testing and were thus replaced with the corresponding backup center. In only three cases was it necessary to randomly re-select new primary and new backup centers because both the original primary and backup centers were closed or estimated that no persons would be tested between April 1 and May 31, 1980.

Results of this survey will only be reported at the national level. No individual state, center, or individual results will be reported here or in subsequent reports.

PARTICIPATING CENTERS

No. of original primary centers participating	208
No. of original backup centers participating because primary center was closed or estimated no testing would occur during the study period	18
No. of new primary or backup centers participating (since both orginal centers were closed or estimated no testing would occur during the study period)	3
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING CENTERS	229

NON-PARTICIPATING CENTERS

No. of centers intending to participate, but conducted no testing during the study	6
No. of Centers initially agreeing to participate but not responding	8
TOTAL NUMBER OF CENTERS CONTACTED	243
Participation Rate (229/237)	96.6%

Based on the (no. of centers participating)/(no. of centers at which testing occurred during the study).

NOTE: The participation rate within each center is not yet available and will be reported in a subsequent report.

GED TESTING SERVICE PUBLICATIONS**

(See below for order information)

(A) *Official GED Practice Tests*, forms A & B.

(B) *Pruebas Muestras Oficiales del GED*, Forma A & B
(Spanish-Official GED Practice Tests, Forms A & B).

(C) *Teacher's Manual* for use with Official GED Practice Tests.

(D) *Manual Para Maestros, para usar con las Pruebas Muestras Oficiales del GED*
(Spanish Teachers Manual for use Official GED Practice Tests).

(E) *Brochure d'information à l'usage des Candidats*
(French-brochure of information and sample test for GED candidates).

(F) *Interim Examiners Manual for the Tests of General Educational Development*

(G) The *Final Report* For A Project to Develop Twelve New Forms of the Tests of General Educational Development and to Standardize the Tests Nationally in the United States.

(H) *The GED Annual Statistical Report*. Contains data from each participating department of education and the GED Testing Service for testing conducted during each calendar year.

(I) *The GED Testing Program*. Brochure of test information and the history of the GED Testing Program.

(J) *Predictive Validity of the GED Tests for Two Year College Study South Plains College, Texas*, by John C. Wolf. GED Research Brief No. 1, March 1980.

(K) *High School Equivalency Candidate Performance on the New York State High School Reading Competency Tests and on the GED Tests*, by Carol Sonnenblick. GED Research Brief No. 2, August 1980.

ORDER INFORMATION

Items	Purchase Price
A, B	$1.75 each, plus $1 shipping and handling for 1-3 packets.
C, D	$4.00 each, plus $1 shipping and handling for 1-3 packets
E - K	Single copies may be obtained free of charge, while supplies last.

**NOTE ALL ORDERS FOR LESS THAN $10 (INCLUDING SHIPPING AND HANDLING) MUST BE PREPAID. Send check or money order to: GED Testing Service, American Council on Education, Suite 20, Washington, D. C. 20036.